

## Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 MCE-00 DODE-00  
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01  
L-03 EB-08 /084 R

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APPROVED BY PM - LHGELB  
EUR/NE - MR. WOODS  
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R 180247Z MAR 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 069921

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: MASS, SW, FR, IN, PK

SUBJECT:POTENTIAL SWEDISH AIRCRAFT SALE TO INDIA

1. ON MONDAY, MARCH 13, SWEDISH AMBASSADOR WACHTMEISTER AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS COUNSELOR, MATS BERGQUIST CALLED ON PM DIRECTOR LESLIE H. GELB TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBLE SALE TO INDIA OF THE VIGGEN AIRCRAFT.

2. WACHTMEISTER STATED THAT ULTIMATELY HIS PRESENTATION CONCERNED SWEDEN'S DEFENSE CAPABILITY AND THAT AN IMPORTANT PART OF THAT CAPABILITY IS THE SWEDISH AIR FORCE. ALTHOUGH SWEDEN HAS A STRICT POLICY ON ARMS EXPORTS, IT WAS NECESSARY TO EXPORT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A VIABLE AIR DEFENSE INDUSTRY. WACHTMEISTER THEN PRESENTED A SHORT  
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"NON-PAPER" DESCRIBING THE PROPOSAL (SAME POINTS AS PRESENTED IN SWEDISH MOD DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR KENNEDY MINOTT) FOR THE SALE AND COPRODUCTION IN INDIA OF AN EXPORT VERSION OF THE VIGGEN DESIGNATED VIGGEN 37-VA. HE ALSO HANDED OVER A MEMORANDUM ENTITLED "BACKGROUND AND TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION OF 37-VA VIGGEN FOR INDIA" CONTAINING A LIST OF US ORIGIN EQUIPMENT REQUIRING RE-EXPORT

APPROVAL BY THE USG. THE AMBASSADOR STRESSED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS NOT AT THIS STAGE MAKING A FORMAL REQUEST, BUT PROVIDING BACKGROUND SO THAT IF AN WHEN INDIA WISHES TO BUY THE VIGGEN, THE USG CAN BE READY TO RESPOND. HE

STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE THAT SWEDEN ATTACHES TO THE SALES AND HIS BELIEF THAT THE US COMPONENTS INVOLVED IN THE AIRCRAFT WERE NOT SENSITIVE IN TERMS OF CURRENT TECHNOLOGY.

3. GELB RESPONDED THAT WE HAD RECEIVED A FULL REPORT FROM AMBASSADOR KENNEDY-MINNOT ON HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SWEDISH MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND THAT WE WOULD WANT TO DISCUSS THIS PROPOSAL FULLY WITH HIM DURING HIS WASHINGTON CONSULTATIONS. GELB REITERATED FROM PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SWEDES THAT WE DESIRED TO ASSIST SWEDEN IN MAINTAINING ITS DEFENSE INDUSTRY AND STRONG DEFENSE POSTURE, BUT THAT WE ALSO DESIRED TO CONTROL ARMS TRANSFERS, AND THE PROPOSED SALE RAISES PROBLEMS. HE STATED THAT OUR OWN APPROACH TO SALES TO THE SUB CONTINENT WAS WELL KNOWN; THE SALE OF THE US A-7 TO PAKISTAN WAS DENIED BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE INTRODUCED A SIGNIFICANT NEW COMBAT CAPABILITY INTO THE AREA. HE FURTHER STATED THAT THE MATTER WAS MADE DIFFICULT BY OUR ATTEMPTS TO URGE RESTRAINT ON AIRCRAFT SALES BY OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THOSE OFFERING AIRCRAFT THAT DID NOT CONTAIN US COMPONENTS. GELB SAID THAT HE WANTED TO MAKE IT PLAIN, IN A SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP AND CONFIDENTIAL

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CANDOR, THAT THERE WERE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED SALE; BUT HE ASSURED WACHTMEISTER THAT OUR DECISION WOULD BE MADE IN A FAIR WAY THAT DID NOT ADVANTAGE ONE COUNTRY OVER ANOTHER.

4. GELB WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT OUR STANDARD FOR APPROVAL OF RETRANSFERS OF US ORIGIN EQUIPMENT IS IN THE LAW; THAT IS THAT THE US WOULD BE PREPARED TO SELL THE SAME EQUIPMENT ITSELF. THEREFORE, WE WILL HAVE TO LOOK AT THIS REQUEST IN LIGHT OF OUR DECISION ON THE A-7. THESE COMMENTS, SAID GELB, WERE IN THE WAY OF A PRELIMINARY ANSWER, BUT WE WOULD LOOK AT THE SPECIFICATIONS OF THE VIGGEN 37-VA, THE POSSIBILITY OF OTHER COUNTRIES MAKING SALES, AND OUR OWN SALES POLICY FOR THE AREA. WACHTMEISTER THEN ASKED IF THE US SAW A PARALLEL BETWEEN SALES TO INDIA AND PAKISTAN. WHEN GELB RESPONDED YES, WACHTMEISTER STATED THAT SWEDEN DID NOT GIVE THE PRESENT POLITICAL CLIMATE IN INDIA; AND, IN ANY CASE, INDIA WILL PURCHASE ADVANCED AIRCRAFT. GELB SAID THE USG WOULD LOOK AT FRENCH AND BRITISH ACTION AND TAKE IT INTO ACCOUNT. USG DECISION ON A-7 WAS MADE ON GROUNDS THAT IT WAS A MORE ADVANCED STRIKE AIRCRAFT THAN ANYTHING IN THE AREA; IF INDIA GETS A

DEEP PENETRATION STRIKE AIRCRAFT, PAKISTAN WILL PURCHASE ONE. GELB REPEATED THAT THE DECISION WOULD NOT BE AN EASY YES OR NO, AND WE WOULD NOT LOOK AT THE SWEDISH REQUEST WITH BLINDERS ON.

5. AMBASSADOR WACHTMEISTER STATED THAT SWEDEN HAD A RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE ON ARMS SALES AND WOULD NOT HAVE GONE AHEAD IN PURSUIT OF THE INDIAN SALE IF THERE WAS A RISK. GELB CONCLUDED BY SAYING WE REALIZED SWEDEN WAS RESPONSIBLE AND OFFERED TO MEET WACHTMEISTER IN ANOTHER WEEK OR SO FOR FURTHER CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE VIGGEN SALE. THE AMBASSADOR THANKED GELB FOR THE OFFER AND SAID THAT SWEDEN WOULD BE HAPPY TO HAVE ITS TECHNICAL EXPERTS BRIEF USG OFFICIALS ON THE PAPERS HE HAD PRESENTED EARLIER.  
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6. ON FRIDAY, MARCH 17, AMBASSADOR WACHTMEISTER NOTIFIED GELB THAT THE GOS WAS FORMALLY REQUESTING USG APPROVAL FOR THE SALE OF VIGGEN TO INDIA. DEPARTMENT HAS BEGUN A REVIEW OF THE REQUEST. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AIRCRAFT, SALES, ARMS, TRADE CONTROLS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 18 mar 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
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